

February 2023 issue of Look-Out.

As this is the first issue of 2023, the Parish Council wish you all a **Very Happy New Year.**

Looking back

There was a Parish Council meeting on the 29th. November 2022, but it was too late to get the report into the December / January edition of 'Look Out', so here's a brief summary. The full minutes are on the notice boards and website.

We had several apologies for absence, but had enough for the meeting to go ahead. There were no mass crowds in the public gallery, which we put down to a possible combination of an exciting agenda and the fact that England were playing Wales in the World Cup (England won 3-0).

Planning matters.

None to discuss, as our comments had to be with Braintree Planning weeks earlier, which they were.

Highways.

All the concerns and requests we have previously made to Essex Highways are mainly still ongoing, but here are some that have reached a conclusion.

A131 Long Gardens - traffic calming.

A speed survey has been carried out by Highways, which did not meet the criteria for any necessary action. A full copy of the survey with a letter to be sent to residents at Long Gardens and Catley Cross. No further action is available and the item is to be taken off future agendas.

Old Road.

We intended to apply to make this a 'Quiet Road', which means that Highways would have signage to make road users aware of walkers and horses. However we need to get the speed limit down from 60-mph to 30-mph, so we're working on that and it may take some time.

New Highways applications...

20's Plenty Group.

Our Parish Council has agreed to support the '20's Plenty for Essex' Campaign. There are calls on Essex County Council to implement 20mph in Wickham St Pauls and we have written to the E.C.C. to request 20mph speed limits throughout the county where people live, work, shop, play or learn, with 30mph as the exception on those roads, where full consideration of the needs of vulnerable road users allows a higher limit.

Grant Funding Applications.

An application from the Village Hall for £2,000.00 towards the new kitchen was agreed. The grant will be taken from our reserves and will not impact on the precept (local council tax).

Budget / Precept for 2023 / 2024.

We agreed to increase the precept, (local Parish tax), in line with the current inflation rate of 11%. This would mean parishioners paying just around 19-pence per week extra on their Council Tax bill.

General.

Our agendas and minutes are posted on the village notice boards and are on-line, but if you can't get access to these and would like hard copies or in large print or in Braille, please let our Clerk know: Mrs Diane Jacob, tel: 07907 63 11 72
or e-mail: parishclerk@wickhamstpaulsparishcouncil.org

Date of Next Meeting.

Tuesday 31st January 2023 (7.30pm).

All are welcome to attend and agendas will be on our website and notice boards. Large print and hard copies are available, just ask your Councillors or Clerk.

Christmas Lights Switch-On.

Our lights were switched on by two of our newest and youngest residents, Bonnie and Teddy of Mansards. A great and well attended evening, we had carol singing by the Hedingham Singers, mince pies courtesy of the **W.I.**, and the mulled wine and gifts were sponsored by **Cox's of Spencer's Farm Shop**. Many thanks to all who came and supported us.

.... and of course, Father Christmas made a special visit to see not only the children, but went on to see some of our residents that couldn't get out.

Flag Flying Programme.

6 February	New Zealand Day	(1902)	New Zealand
19 February	Birthday of the Duke of York	(1960)	Union

The St. George flag will be flown most of the time in between other appointed flags.

We fly some of our Commonwealth Country flags, particularly those which include the Union flag in its canton. We also fly flags from other countries to mark important historical events.

A full list of our flag flying days is posted on the village notice board and on the W.St.P. website.